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FERNANDO MENIS TOPOGRAPHY AND MATERIALITY

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The clear, powerful landscape that surrounds me on the island is responsible for the architecture I conceive and produce. When I think of a new building, I am considering its plasticity. I don't see it as a row of objects but as a global work which begins from its shape, from its form (a work which conforms). Projects are conceived through their volumes; extracted and molded, shaped. This is how the landscape of Tenerife was made. I think again about the program, about functionality, and I try to define a program which has the potential to evolve, to grow; volume and functionality. I propose architecture that is needed by the environment.

A continuous line of thought can be traced all the way from the first works produced during my partnership in Artengo Menis Pastrana - AMP - right up to the ones now under development in my new independent office, Menis Arquitectos. Working on an island has given me the opportunity to think about the possibilities of defining elements, to plan things that are different, perhaps even projects that take longer because of the manual work involved, but which are less complicated regarding formalities and procedures. Therefore, I began to search my environment for a way to solve my problems; to resolve the project with elements I may find right in front of me. The idea is to rediscover those materials that were used formerly but then forgotten, but also to use the most recent ones, to approach working methods in which all elements make the form vary, creating a dynamism between element and form. The projects and buildings shown in this exhibition are good examples of this. The experimentation I engaged in during construction of the MAGMA, in which I collaborated with my colleagues Artengo and Pastrana, led to new projects under development today; the quantity of materials that appeared during the restoration of the Tanque created a unique staircase at the MM House, whereas growing up in a landscape full of banana trees gave this house a façade that resembles the trunk of a palm tree.

Fernando Menis
Santa Cruz, January 2006

Der spanische Architekt Fernando Menis hat in seinen monolithischen wie skulpturalen Bauten eine Formensprache und eine Ausdruckskraft gefunden, die nicht nur der Internationalen Moderne verpflichtet sind, sondern auch von der Bautradition und den Ressourcen Teneriffas geprägt werden. Seine Arbeiten fügen sich wie selbstverständlich in die vulkanische Topografie der Landschaft ein und setzen dennoch unübersehbare Zeichen.

Katalog und Ausstellung machen deutlich, dass Fernando Menis eigene gestalterische und konzeptionelle Wege beschreitet und dies nicht nur bei großen Bauvolumen unter Beweis stellt, sondern auch in seiner intensiven Auseinandersetzung mit Projekten im Bereich der Stadtplanung. Beispiel dafür ist der von Menis 2004 gewonnene Wettbewerb »Litoral/Seaboard Puerto de la Cruz«.

Die geplanten Eingriffe erlauben eine Erweiterung und Wiederbelebung eines bedeutenden Teils des Hafens von Puerto de la Cruz. Im kleineren Maßstab und auch basierend auf den Grundlagen des Ökotourismus sind Menis' Projekte auf La Gomera: Der Entwurf für einen Teil des Ortes Vallehermoso geht dabei von den Schwerpunkten Tourismus, Gesundheit und Natur aus. In Agulo werden eine Reihe von historischen Häusern erneuert, ergänzt und in kleine Hotels umgewandelt und somit ein Quartier geschaffen, das eine neue Verbindung zwischen den Einwohnern und den Besuchern herstellt.

Der Karriere von Fernando Menis über die Jahre folgend, sind wir sicher, dass noch zahlreiche Überraschende wie sensible Planungen und Entwürfe einer transformierten Moderne zu erwarten sind.

Kristin Feireiss, Hans-Jürgen Commerell

In his monolithic and sculptural building, Spanish architect Fernando Menis has discovered a formal idiom and an expressive power that is not only indebted to International Modernism, but is also impressed by Tenerifian resources and building traditions. His projects insert themselves quite naturally into the volcanic topography of the surrounding landscape while at the same time setting highly conspicuous accents.

Both this exhibition and its accompanying catalog demonstrate that both conceptually and in terms of design, Fernando Menis has confidently taken his own paths, - not only in his large-scale architectural undertakings, but also in his intensive activities involving urban planning projects. An example of this is the competition »Litoral/Seaboard Puerto de la Cruz«, which Menis won in 2004.

The planned interventions will facilitate the expansion and revitalization of a significant section of the harbor of Puerto de la Cruz. On a smaller scale, and also based on ecotourism principles, are Menis' projects on La Gomera: The design for a district of Vallehermoso focuses on tourism, health and nature as points of departure. In Agulo, a series of historic houses will be modernized, modified, and converted into small hotels, creating a new quarter and establishing new connections between residents and visitors.

Having followed Fernando Menis' career over the years, we confidently anticipate many further astonishing and sensitive plans and designs that partake of the spirit of a transformed Modernism.

Kristin Feireiss, Hans-Jürgen Commerell

Zur Architektur von Fernando Menis

Die wilden Vulkanlandschaften Teneriffas waren früh schon eine wichtige Inspirationsquelle von Artengo, Menis, Pastrana (AMP), einem der eigenwilligsten Architektenteams Spaniens, als dessen Meisterwerk der Präsidentenpalast in Santa Cruz de Tenerife gelten darf. In ihm verschmelzen kubisch-expressive Formen mit der Schwere von Beton und Basalt zu einer skulpturalen, bald dekonstruktivistisch, bald tellurisch anmutenden Baukunst, die derart wohl nur auf den Kanarischen Inseln entstehen konnte.

Vulkanische Dynamik

Schon vor der Fertigstellung des Präsidentenpalasts hatte Menis 1998 in alleiniger Verantwortung im Büro AMP den Umbau eines Öltanks zum Kulturzentrum »El Tanque« in Santa Cruz realisiert. Um die monumentale Raumwirkung des Tankinneren nicht zu beeinträchtigen, entschied er sich für eine unterirdische Erschliessung, von der aussen nur die an tektonische Verwerfungen gemahnende Eingangspartie sichtbar ist. Deren kubistisch anmutende Plastizität ist seither charakteristisch für Menis' Baukunst, wie etwa das im Jahr 2005 erarbeitete Projekt der aus zwei gebrochenen und gegeneinander verschobenen Baukörpern komponierten Villa »La Palmera« in Santa Cruz zeigt. Sie war auch der konzeptionelle Ausgangspunkt beim bisher wichtigsten Werk von Menis, dem Magma Arte y Congresos genannten Kultur- und Kongresszentrum in der Ferienstadt Playa de las Americas im Süden Teneriffas.

Als das seit Ende 1993 von AMP erarbeitete Projekt 1996 an einem politisch motivierten Baustopp zu scheitern drohte, fand Menis Zeit, den Entwurf grundlegend zu überarbeiten. Auf dem von einer Autobahn, Hotels und einem Busbahnhof eingekreisten Grundstück hätte Rem Koolhaas wohl einen intellektuellen Flirt mit der leicht abgetakelten Retortenwelt gewagt; Menis aber suchte den Dialog mit der von Sonne und Wind gepeinigten Landschaft. Daraus resultierte ein dynamischer Entwurf, der sich im Lauf der Zeit formal und inhaltlich wandelte. Denn Menis konnte seine Auftraggeber schliesslich davon überzeugen, das Kongresshaus weiterzubauen und dieses durch neue Interventionen zum kulturellen Zentrum des Touristenparadieses an der Adeje-Küste aufzuwerten.

Sprechende Architektur

Menis' künstlerische Anliegen zeigen sich schon in der Aussenform des Ende 2005 fertiggestellten Gebäudes. Glaubt man doch beim ersten Blick, eine gigantische Land-Art-Skulptur vor sich zu haben, bei der eine fließende Masse zwischen Felsblöcken erstarrt ist. Diese »Architecture parlante«, die laut Menis von Riffen und Wogen erzählt, lässt an erodierte Felsen denken, auf denen helle, vulkanische Schichten oder aber die grauen Hüllen der Gewächshäuser wie riesige Kissen lagern. Doch die zwölf mit Hammerschlägen grob behauenen Betonfelsen umschreiben zusammen mit dem aus einer Stahlkonstruktion gebildeten und mit Faserzement-

On the Architecture of Fernando Menis

From the beginning, the wild volcanic landscape of Tenerife was a source of inspiration for Artengo, Menis, Pastrana (AMP), one of Spain's most headstrong architectural teams, whose masterwork is generally considered to be the Presidential Palace in Santa Cruz de Tenerife. This project fused cubist-expressive forms with the weightiness of concrete and basalt to form a sculptural shape, now deconstructivist, now telluric, that could only have come into being on the Canary Islands.

Volcanic Dynamism

In 1998, even before the completion of the Presidential Palace, Menis worked intensely on project direction within the office of AMP for the conversion of an oil tank into the culture center »El Tanque« in Santa Cruz. In order to avoid interfering with the monumental spatial impact of the tank's interior, he opted for a subterranean entrance, of which only the entry area, reminiscent of discarded tectonic elements, is visible from the outside. Since then, its quasi-cubist plasticity has remained characteristic of Menis' architecture, as seen for instance in his Villa »La Palmera« project in Santa Cruz, planned in 2005, and composed of a pair of fractured structural elements that have apparently been shifted against one another. It was also the conceptual point of departure for Menis' most important work to date during his partnership in AMP, the Magma Arte y Congresos Cultural and Congress Center in the resort town of Playa de las Americas in southern Tenerife.

In 1996, when the project, planned by AMP in late 1993, was threatened with failure by a politically-motivated interruption in construction, Menis found the time to completely re-conceptualize the design. Faced with this site, encircled by an expressway, hotels and a bus station, Rem Koolhaas might well have dared an intellectual flirt with the slightly unmoored test-tube world. Menis, on the other hand, sought a dialogue with the landscape, so relentlessly exposed to sun and wind. The result was a dynamic design that evolved both formally and contentually over time. For Menis was able, in the end, to persuade his client to expand the congress building, upgrading it through new interventions into a cultural center for the tourist paradise on the Adeje coastline.

Architecture Parlante

Menis' artistic intentions are revealed already in the exterior shape of the building, completed in late 2005. At first glance, visitors have the impression of encountering a gigantic land art sculpture, in which a flowing mass has congealed between boulders. This »architecture parlante«, suggestive, according to Menis, of reefs and waves, is reminiscent of eroded cliffs upon which pale volcanic sediments or the gray sheathes of greenhouses have been set like immense pillows. Yet the twelve concrete cliffs, roughly hewn with hammer blows, in concert with the roof, formed of a steel construction and clad in fiber cement panels, circumscribe a thoroughly functional building that is animated by the tension between morphological weight and constructive lightness. A wide

platten verkleideten Dach ein durchaus funktionales Haus, das von der Spannung zwischen morphologischer Schwere und bautechnischer Leichtigkeit lebt. Eine breite Eingangsfront führt ins grottenartige Foyer, das - wie der Versammlungssaal im Präsidentenpalast von Santa Cruz - einem flachen Basaltgewölbe gleich von grob strukturierten Betonbalken überspannt wird. Hier zeigt es sich, dass es Menis trotz der spektakulären, auf die Fassadenarchitektur von Gehry oder Eisenman verweisenden Aussenform, um eine elementare Baukunst geht, die auf konstruktiver Wahrheit, funktionaler Logik und der Kontinuität des Plastischen basiert. Im Zentrum steht der Raum, der mit seinen Kavernen, Durchgängen und Hallen zum bestimmenden Erlebnis wird. In der Tiefe des Eingangsfoyers weist eine mittels Lichteffekten inszenierte Treppe hinauf zu einer zeltartig hellen Halle, während sich rechts der Zugang zum Veranstaltungssaal öffnet. Ein niedriger Betonbaldachin lässt diesen Raum katedralartig weit erscheinen.

Hinten erkennt man die abschliessbare Theaterbühne, vor der das Orchesterpodium aufgebaut werden kann. Schnurgerade Schienen durchschneiden die verschachtelte, an Hans Scharoun gemahnende Deckenlandschaft, die wie die Aussenhaut des Daches mit Faserzementplatten geschuppt ist. Sie deuten an, wie sich der 2500 Personen fassende Saal durch Wände unterteilen lässt, die aus den Betonfelsen herausgezogen werden können.

Sakrale Räume

Am anderen Ende des Eingangsfoyers lockt die höhlenartige Bar, die mit einer windschiefen Fensterfront den Blick auf die Insel La Gomera freigibt. Dort konnte Menis im vergangenen Jahr für zwei Dörfer Vorschläge erarbeiten, welche die Grundlagen für einen sanften Tourismus schaffen werden.

In Vallehermoso soll das Haus des Malers Pedro García Cabrera in ein kleines Museum mit Bibliothek, Reception und Buchshop umgebaut werden. Von seiner Cafétterasse aus wird man auf einen eingefriedeten Garten mit einem nestartigen »Baumhaus« blicken, das vom Stamm einer kanarischen Dattelpalme getragen wird. In Agulo ist der Umbau von zwei historischen Wohnhäusern in kleine, von Dorfbewohnern geleitete Hotels geplant. Ausserdem soll das Haus des Malers José Aguiar in ein Museum mit Künstlertreff transformiert werden, wobei pergolaartige Betonelemente den neu hergerichteten Aussenraum akzentuieren werden. Hier manifestiert sich erneut Menis' Interesse an der Gestaltung des urbanen Raums, dank dem er schon 2004 den Wettbewerb für die Neugestaltung der Uferanlagen von Puerto de la Cruz hat für sich entscheiden können.

Im Bau befindet sich derzeit die 2005 von Menis entworfene Kirche »Santísimo Redentor« in La Laguna. Eine Vorstufe zu diesem von Oberlicht erhellten Gotteshaus findet sich bereits im Magma-Zentrum, und zwar in einem gleich neben dem Haupteingang als Lounge eingerichteten Lichtturm, in welchem man sich fast wie in Le Corbusiers Wallfahrtskapelle von Ronchamp fühlt. Die zeichenhafte, aus einem vierfach gebrochenen Betonfelsen bestehende Erlöserkirche, die ihrerseits in Plan und Schnitt auf Ronchamp verweist, erhebt sich in einem Aussenquartier der alten Universitätsstadt auf einem ganz traditionell mit Bruchsteinmauern terrassierten Grundstück, das an frühere Landschaftsprojekte von AMP in Icod und La Gomera erinnert.

entry front leads into a grotto-like foyer that (like the assembly hall of the Presidential Palace in Santa Cruz) is spanned by roughly structured concrete beams like a flat basalt vault. Here it becomes clear that Menis, despite a spectacular outer form that alludes to the facade architecture of Gehry or Eisenman, is concerned with an elementary architecture based on constructive truth, functional logic and the continuity of plastic shape. At the center stands the space which, with its caverns, passageways and halls, offers a highly characteristic experience. In the depths of the entry foyer, a staircase, scenarized by means of lighting effects, leads up to a bright, tent-like hall, while the right side opens onto the events hall. A low concrete canopy endows the space with cathedral-like vastness.

To the rear is set the theater stage, which can be sealed off, in front of which the orchestra podium can be erected. Straight tracks transect the interlocking landscape of the ceiling, reminiscent of Hans Scharoun, which is scaled with fiber cement panels like the outer skin of the roof. These allude to the fact that the hall, which accommodates 2500, can be subdivided by walls that are extracted from the concrete cliffs.

Sacral Space

Set enticingly at the other end of the entry foyer is the cave-like bar, whose warped window front opens onto a view of the island of La Gomera. There, in recent years, Menis has succeeded in realizing proposals for two villages which provide a basis for unobtrusive tourism.

In Vallehermoso, the home of the painter Pedro García Cabrera is to be converted into a small museum with library, reception area and bookshop. Its café terrace offers views of an enclosed garden, whose nest-like »tree house« is supported by the trunk of a Canarian date palm. Planned for Agulo is the conversion of two historic dwellings into small hotels, to be managed by village residents. Additionally, the residence of the artist José Aguiar is to be transformed into a museum with artist's club, while pergola-style concrete elements will accent the reconfigured outdoor areas. Here is another manifestation of Menis' renewed interest in designing urban space, which prompted him in 2004 to take part in a competition for the redesign of the waterside of Puerto de la Cruz.

Currently under construction is the church »Santísimo Redentor« in La Laguna, designed by Menis in 2005. A preliminary stage that led toward this house of God, lit from above, is found as early as the Magma Center, specifically in the light tower set immediately alongside the main entrance, and configured as a lounge where guests feel almost as if they were in Le Corbusier's pilgrimage chapel at Ronchamp. The emblematic Church of the Savior, composed of a concrete massif broken into four sections, has a plan and section that allude to Ronchamp. Set in an outlying district of the old university town, it rises from a quite traditional terraced site with quarystone walls that recalls earlier landscape projects by AMP in Icod and La Gomera.

The MUVISA residential quarter in La Laguna, designed in 2005, also consists of four interlocking, warped volumes, which can be interpreted as a homage to three architects of great importance for Menis: Javier Díaz

Ebenfalls aus vier leicht windschief aneinander gefügten Volumen wird die 2005 entworfene MUVISA-Wohnanlage in La Laguna bestehen, die man als Hommage an drei für Menis wichtige Architekten interpretieren kann: Javier Díaz Llanos und Vicente Saavedra aus Santa Cruz sowie Josep Antoni Coderch aus Barcelona. Die felsblockartige Hofrandbebauung, deren 53 Wohnungen von den Gelenkstellen her über Treppen, Lifte und Laubengänge erschlossen werden sollen, wird eine für Menis typische, im Wohnungsbau aber ungewöhnliche Plastizität aufweisen.

Dieses Wohngebäude und die übrigen neuen Projekte verdeutlichen, wie sehr Menis seine Bauten »als Organismen und nicht als Mechanismen« versteht, die ganz in den topographischen und geologischen Gegebenheiten des Ortes verwurzelt sind.

Roman Hollenstein
Zürich, im Januar 2006

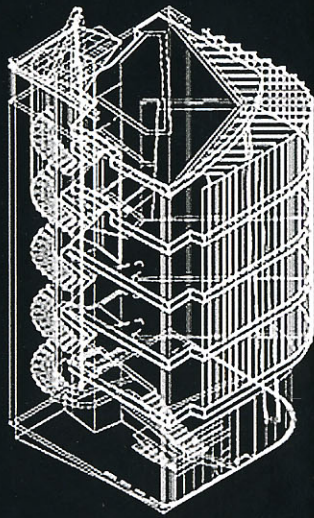
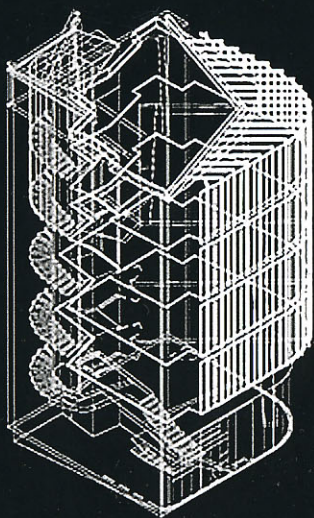
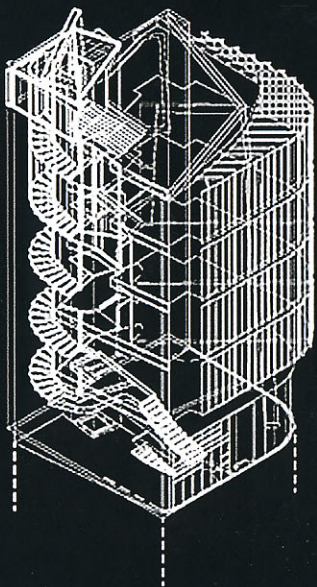
Llanos and Vicente Saavedra from Santa Cruz, and Josep Antoni Coderch from Barcelona. The boulder-like block development, with inner courtyard, its 53 apartments accessed from routing points via stairs, elevators and access balconies, manifests a plasticity that is typical for Menis, if unusual in residential architecture. This residence and the other new projects make clear the degree to which Menis conceives of his buildings »as organisms, not mechanisms«, and the degree to which they take root in the preexisting topographic and geological environment of a given locale.

Roman Hollenstein
Zürich, January 2006

Completed, 1st. Prize Manuel de Orúa; finalist FAD
1999

The building process generated piles of waste material that would be considered unusable in any other project. The same occurs when rundown buildings are demolished or dismantled. But precisely this reuse was one of the objectives proposed by the design for the MM House in Santa Cruz, Tenerife.

First, the staircase is suspended from the roof by tubes and metal sheet (retrieved from dismantled oil tanks) to which specially made metal steps are soldered, and which are fixed into place using the remains of short steel girders left over from construction work. In the façade, secondly, we experiment with a system of slats constructed using galvanized water pipes and wood. The slats can be adjusted in order to modulate the penetration of sunlight and views. The building, set on a corner site, is separated from party walls by a court with variable widths which provides both ventilation and natural lighting without exterior interference, and optimum acoustic comfort. The brief is for commercial premises plus garage on the ground floor, four apartments on two floors, separated diagonally, and a single family residence with a terrace-garden above.





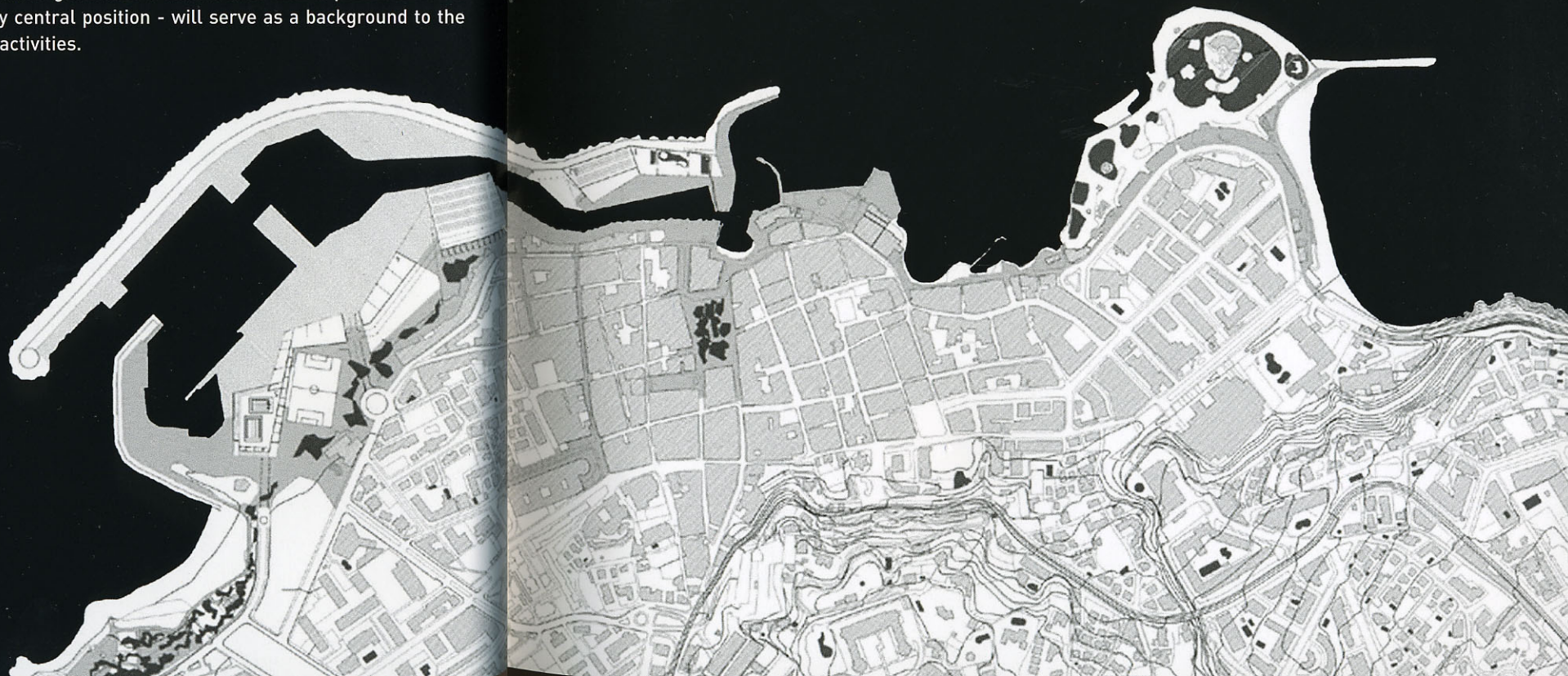


Ideas competition, 1st. Puerto de la Cruz Seafront 2004

The planned interventions involve both the extension and regeneration of an important harborsite area of Puerto de la Cruz. The recreation of these spaces will promote the development of ecotourism activities. Footpaths and information panels will serve as teaching and recreational guides leading to a greater understanding of marine life.

Once recovered and adapted to its new functions, a promenade will be set along this strip of coast, and provided with seats so that visitors can enjoy the pools and the sun, thereby extending the number of public spaces dedicated to urban spas. The new activities are located on three base modules. The first accommodates the spa, the second contains parking with offices, and the third containing commercial shops and sport facilities in the upper level.

The unity between the breakwater and the upper promenade generates a harbor area that is protected from wind. The Castle - which now reassumes its historically central position - will serve as a background to the natural scenery that is available for cultural and leisure activities.



Paseo Martimo

acceso 4 desde la plaza del charco

acceso 3 desde la calle sanelipe



acceso1 desde la playa charcón y playa grande

acceso 2 desde la avda. jose m^a campo llarena



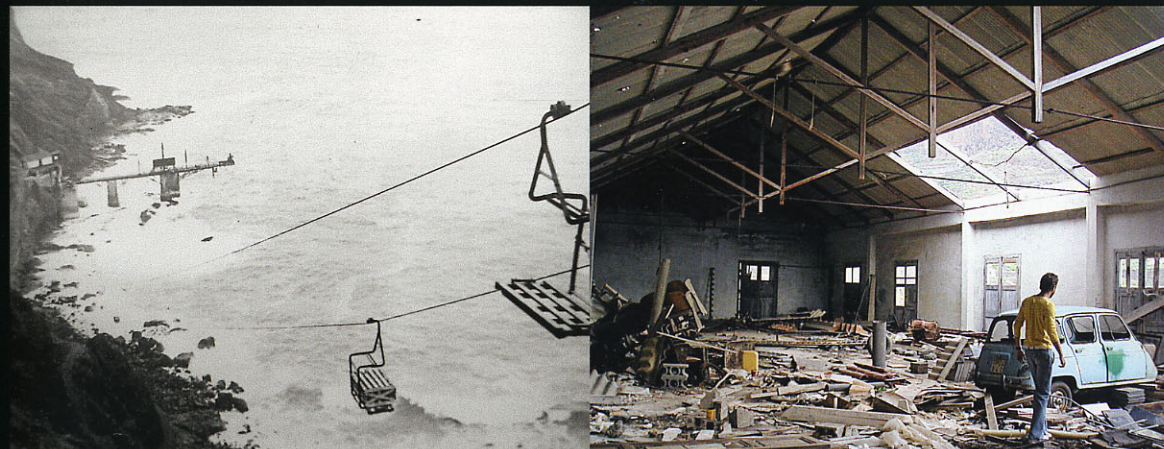
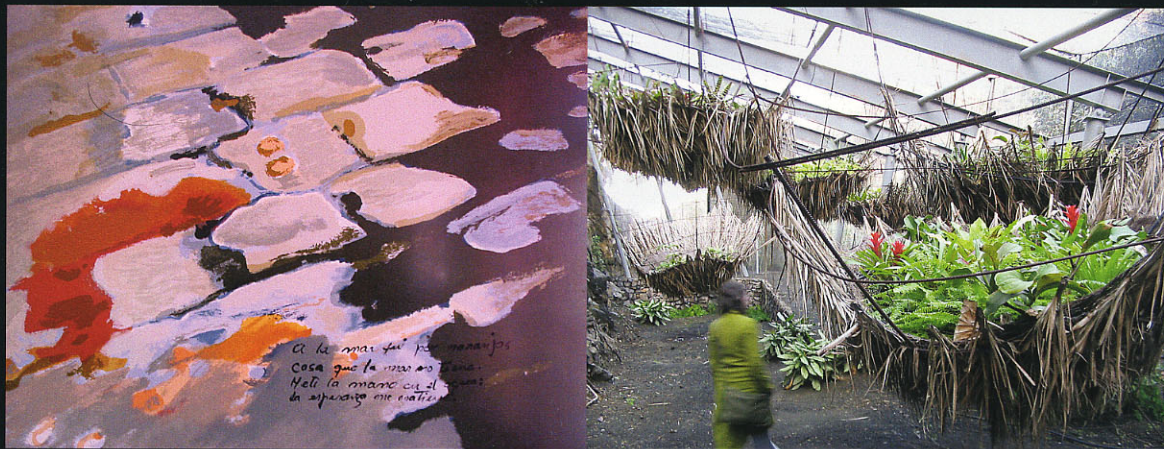


Competition, 1st. Agulo and Vallehermoso Historical Center Rehabilitation. La Gomera
2005

We begin from a reflection: the future of tourism in the Canary Islands as an economic resource for many of their towns. The »resort« hotel model which can be found, for instance, in South Tenerife, contains facilities that offers tourists various leisure activities on the immediate premises, but neglect any dialogue with the environment. The problem of these limited perimeter hotels is that they can neither grow, nor offer any new activities afterwards, which dramatically limits their development. Nowadays, these hotels are old-fashioned and incapable of coping with such attractions as Dubai's artificial islands. What type of alternative tourism can our islands offer? We take the »resort« concept, remove its physical limits, and amplify its principles to encompass the entire territory, adapting it to the specific needs of each area being analyzed.

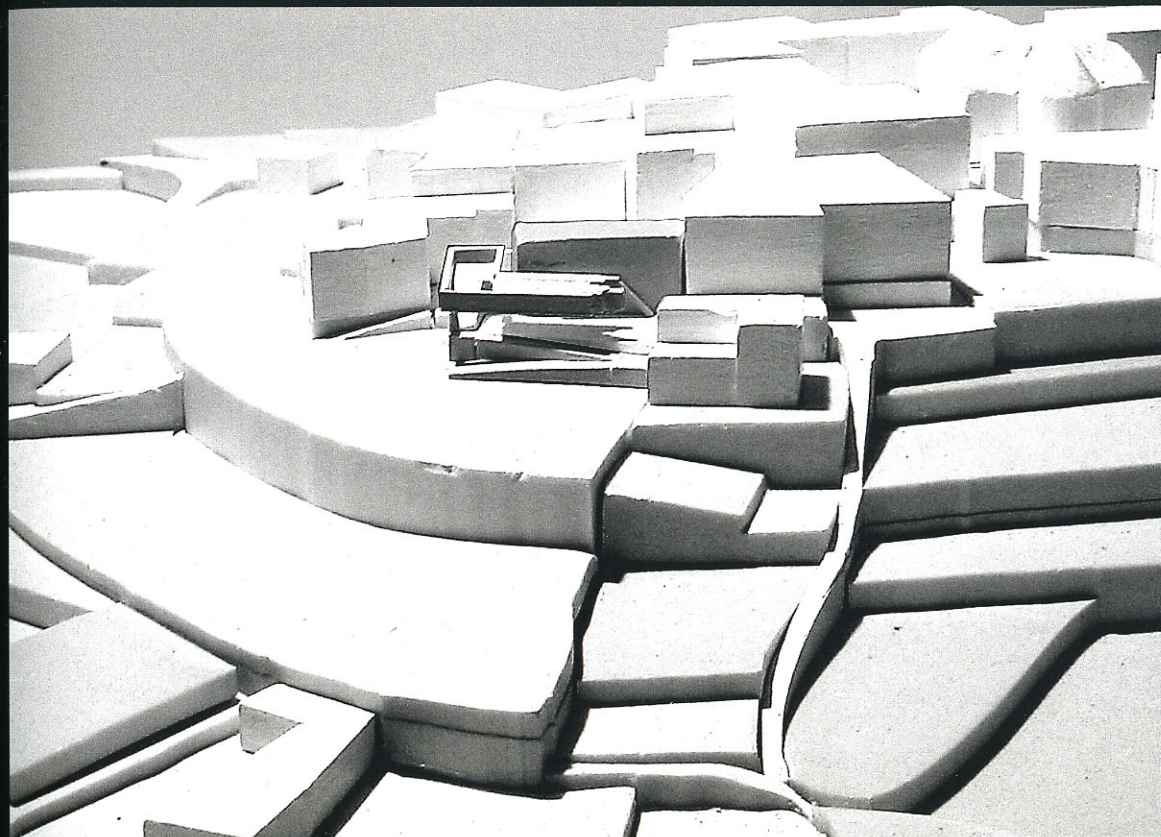
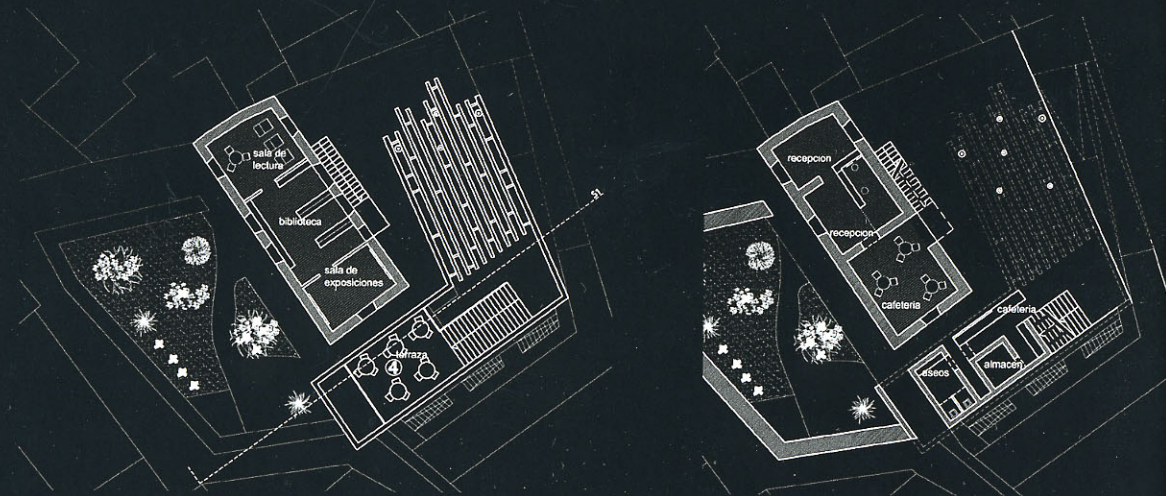
Far from mass tourism, these small territories need a new concept for tourism, defined as more individualist and more open to new experiences: to the enjoyment of the landscape, an understanding of the local culture, and the establishment of more intense contacts with the locals. In other words, it is about proposing an exchange between visitors and residents; about temporarily becoming a part of the environment, living with it and even enriching it. From our perspective in town-planning and architecture, our intention is to find answers that are adapted to the specific needs defining the towns in La Gomera: Agulo and Vallehermoso.

The proposals rescue two old houses once belonging to representative characters from La Gomera Island: the painter Aguiar in Agulo and the poet Pedro Garcia Cabrera in Vallehermoso.



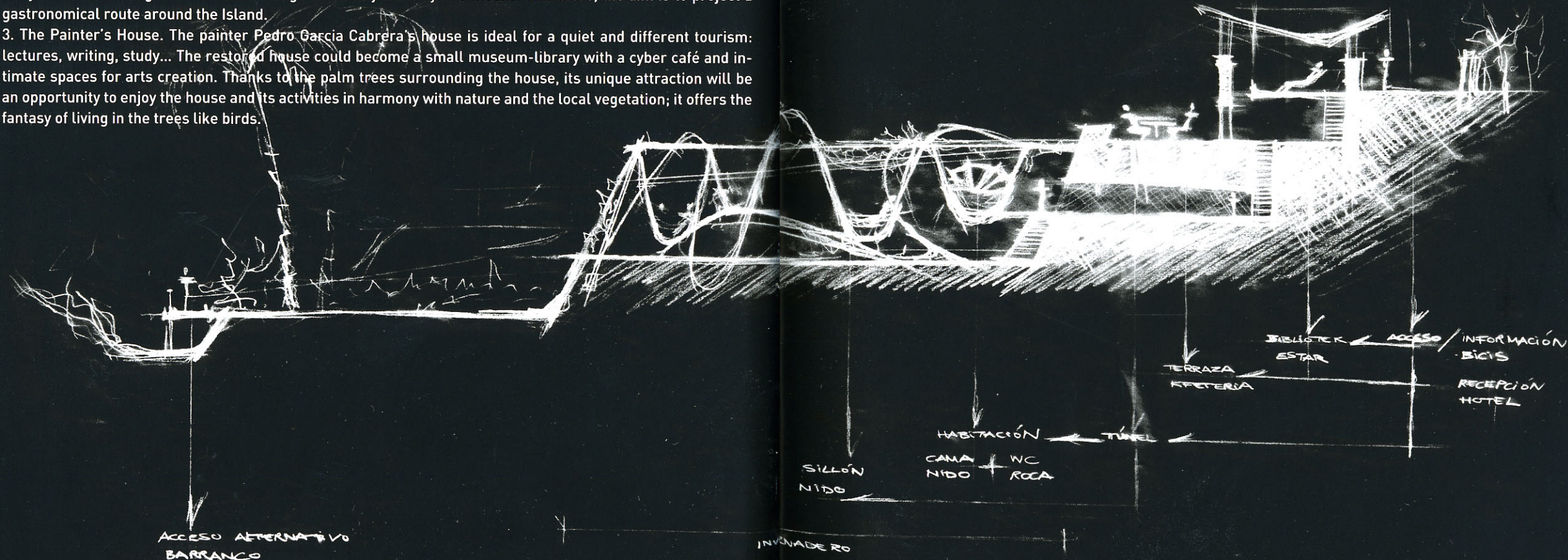
Agulo is a village with few facilities, but is nonetheless very attractive, being situated between the sea and the Garajonay National Park, with views to Teide. Our proposal intends to enliven this place and to give it a future; the idea is to create a »resort« involving the entire village and basing it onto three principles:

1. The two historical houses are restored in order to integrate them into the village in the form of two small hotels; it is very important that the owners be locals and that the hotels be prepared to accommodate the traveling type of tourist. The aim is to establish temporary cohabitation between residents and visitors who are in search of an alternative tourism.
2. We want create a context for light sports and health, proposing some public facilities such as sports and leisure facilities whose new center of attraction would be a spa system.
3. The painter Aguiar's house is being restored and converted into a museum with an external area devoted to arts creation (studio, workshops). These arts facilities could also motivate the opening of shops dedicated to objects produced in situ.



Vallehermoso already has some infrastructures that offer visitors interesting activities; the problem is that these infrastructures are not coordinated. Our proposal, beginning from the existing situation, intends to create common elements or brands in order to organize and make coherent everything the village has to offer visitors.

1. Reorganize the hotels, rural houses, apartments etc. in order to establish a kind of network able to provide better quality without sacrificing the specific characteristics of each residence.
2. La Gomera gastronomy. Already present in some of the local bars and restaurants, the local gastronomy is not yet familiar enough to enable the village to identify itself by this means. Therefore, the aim is to project a gastronomical route around the Island.
3. The Painter's House. The painter Pedro García Cabrera's house is ideal for a quiet and different tourism: lectures, writing, study... The restored house could become a small museum-library with a cyber café and intimate spaces for arts creation. Thanks to the palm trees surrounding the house, its unique attraction will be an opportunity to enjoy the house and its activities in harmony with nature and the local vegetation; it offers the fantasy of living in the trees like birds.

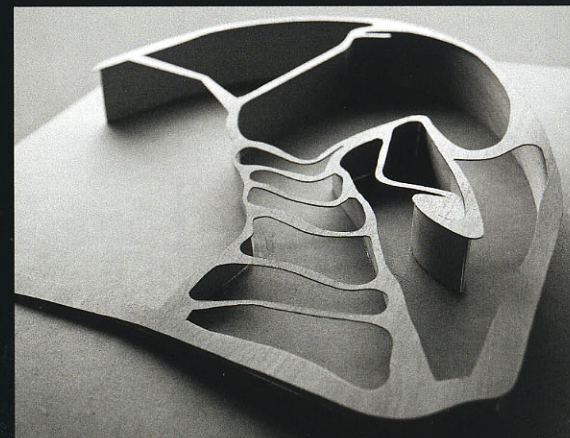
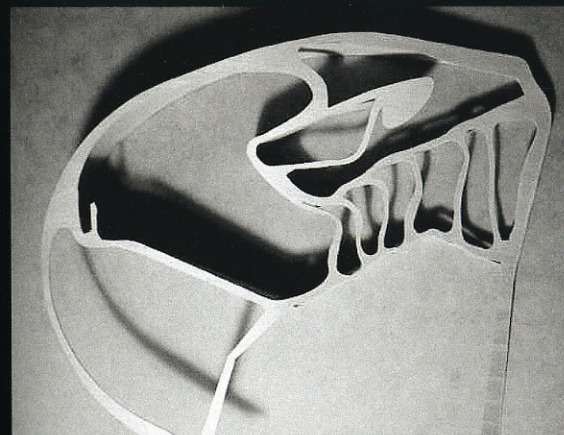
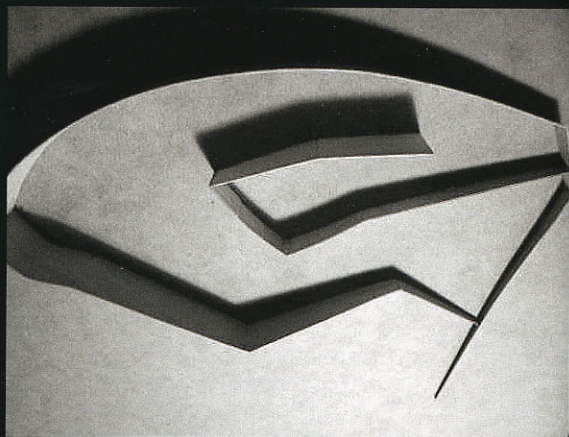


Competition, 1st. prize
2005

A network of paths, based on a geometry adapted to the existing topography, allows convenient access throughout the park and smooth transitions between the different levels of the site. The main entrance offers an overview of the three different zones that characterize the park. To the west, the slightly inclined circular esplanade connected to a stepped path which gives access to the western entrance. To the east, two paths ascend to the existing viewing platform, which offers panoramic views of the park, the surrounding areas, and all of Santa Cruz. To the southeast, finally, serpentine paths emerge from the other extremity of the park, passing through a series of platforms planted with varying densities of trees and vegetation.

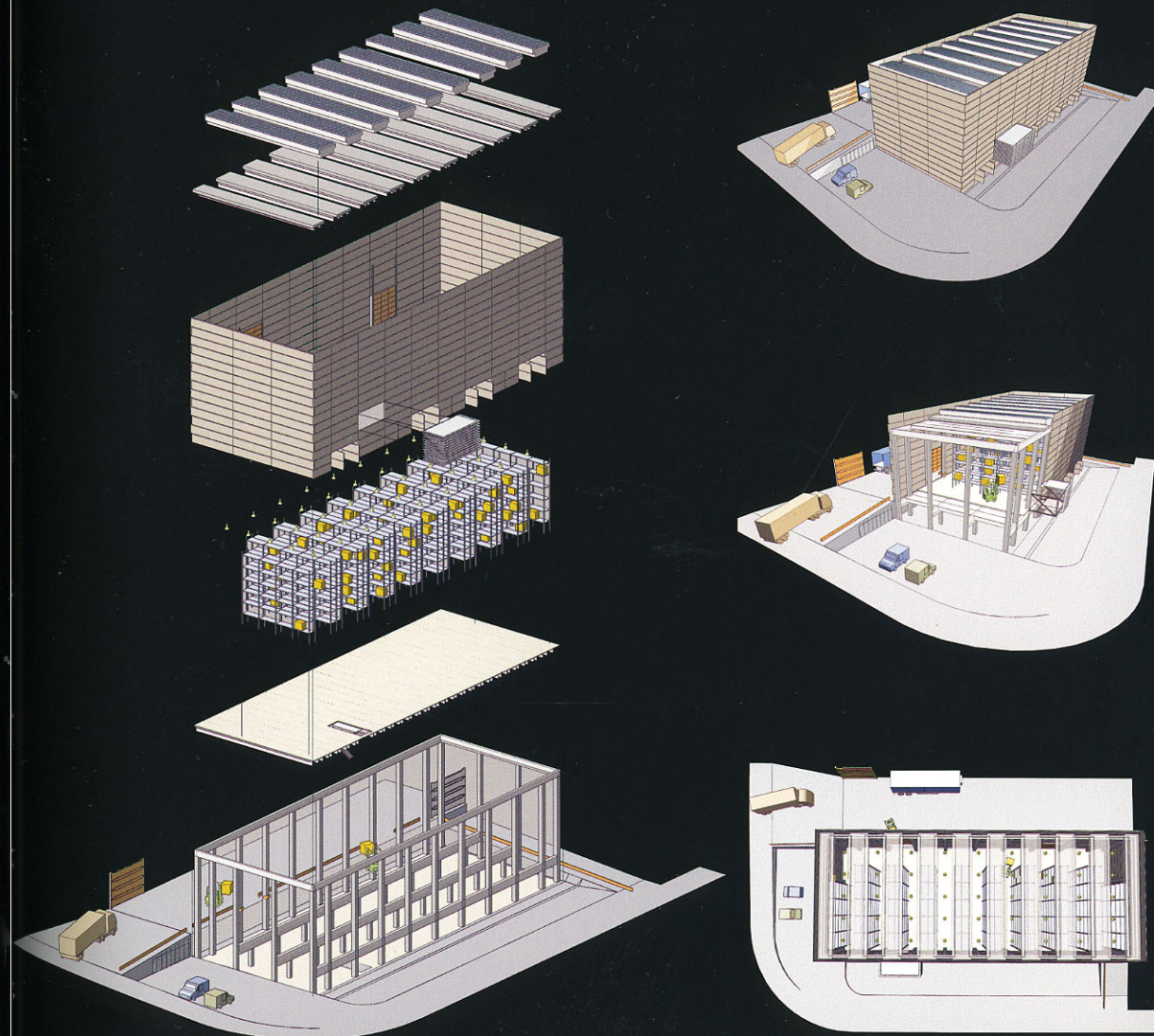
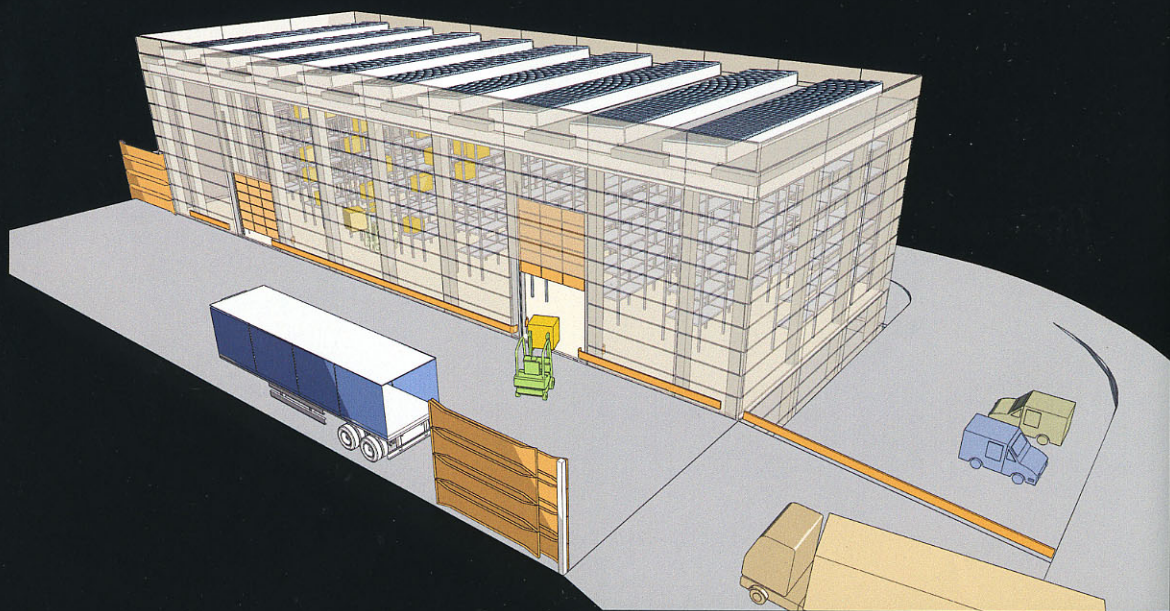
The park alludes to the geometry of the gardens of »Gillette« the project Fernando Menis presented in 1980 at the Parque la Vilette Competition (Paris).





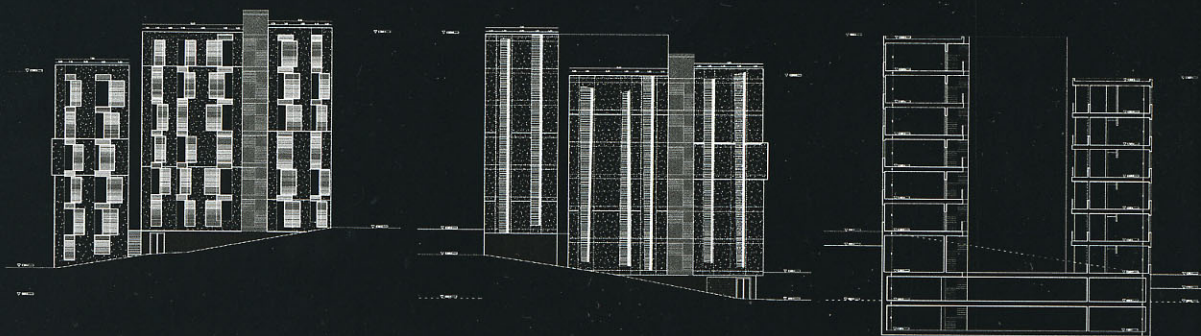
Project
2005

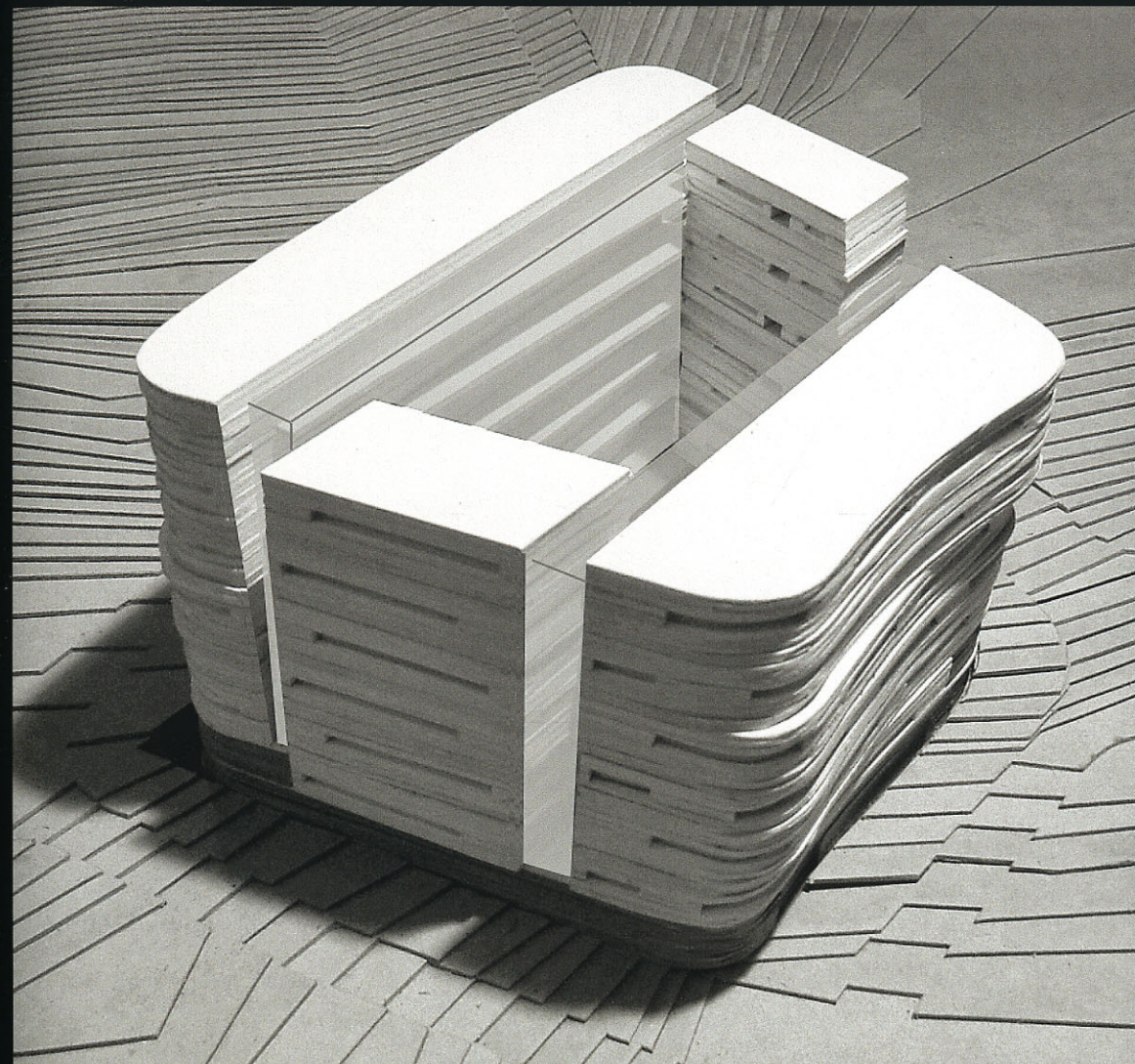
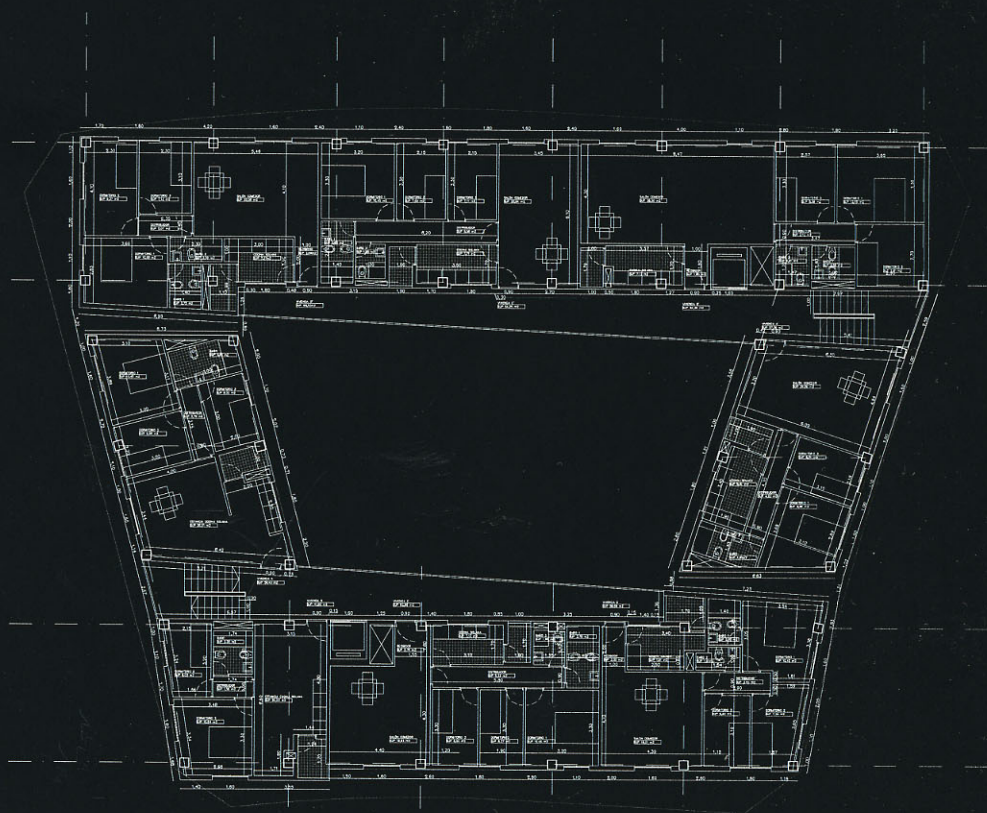
The project aims to recuperate and enhance the qualities of an building typology that has been converted into an excessively controlled construction due to functional needs. This intention motivates the intent to establish a dialogue between aesthetics and function. The access and unloading area is represented by a layer that wraps around the premises, which divides the area into sectors through some heights changes. In the middle of this surface, set at different levels, the main volume emerges like a stony box at the heart of the site. This box opens its facade at some points, unifying and controlling access levels. In order to achieve this, the interior volume is divided into two areas with different warehousing capacities and opened toward each of the arrival spaces. A smaller prism »floats« on the stony surface of the premises. Its metallic character heightens the industrial look of the building, being simultaneously the point of reference the main volume.



Competition, 1st. Muvisa Social Apartments
2005

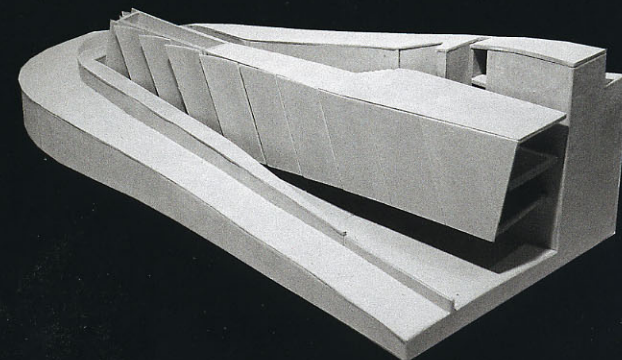
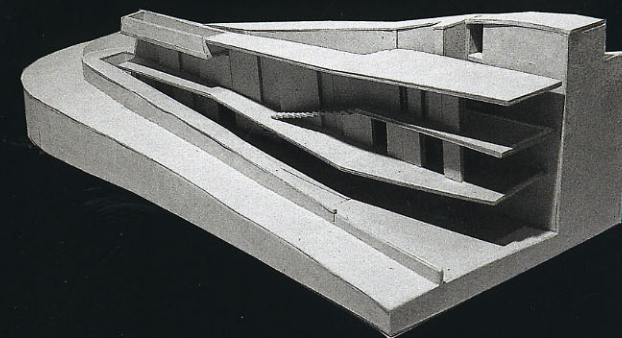
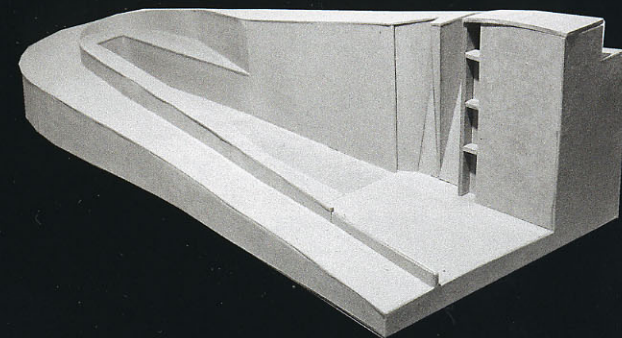
The block contains nine units per floor, with two circulation cores giving access from the street. Structural spans have been maximized to give units the best possible layouts. The units are distributed around the cores, minimizing common circulation space. 53 units are distributed on 6 floors, with two underground parking levels containing 53 parking spots. The building is conceived as a contained courtyard building, with all circulation taking place within the interior, giving all units exterior views and natural lighting.





Project
2005

The project is for a residential house in the Las Mimosas area (Santa Cruz de Tenerife), a residential zone characterized by a distinctive type of house. The area around the house is treated as a natural space, and the existing vegetation is preserved. La Palmera's volume grows out of the dimensions of the site, which is limited by its narrowness, and by the house's intended function, to contain a vast library. The basic concept are various floors (rooms) connected by ramps and configuring the interior space around a »wall of books«. This wall consists of shelves and wooden mobile elements where books and videos are to be stored. This »book wall« is as long and high as the house, and subdivides the space, opening passageways through it while the floors and ramps turn around it. The house is enveloped by a layer consisting of wooden panels that are reminiscent of the trunk of a palm tree. This layer shelters the house from sunlight while creating a natural ventilation space between itself and the internal glass facade.



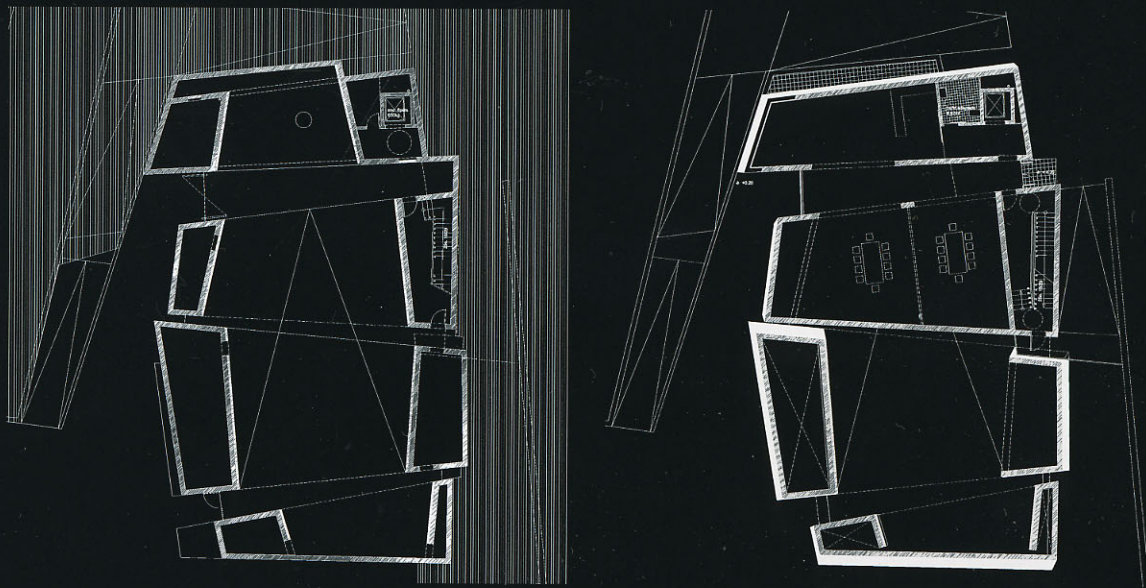
Under construction
2004

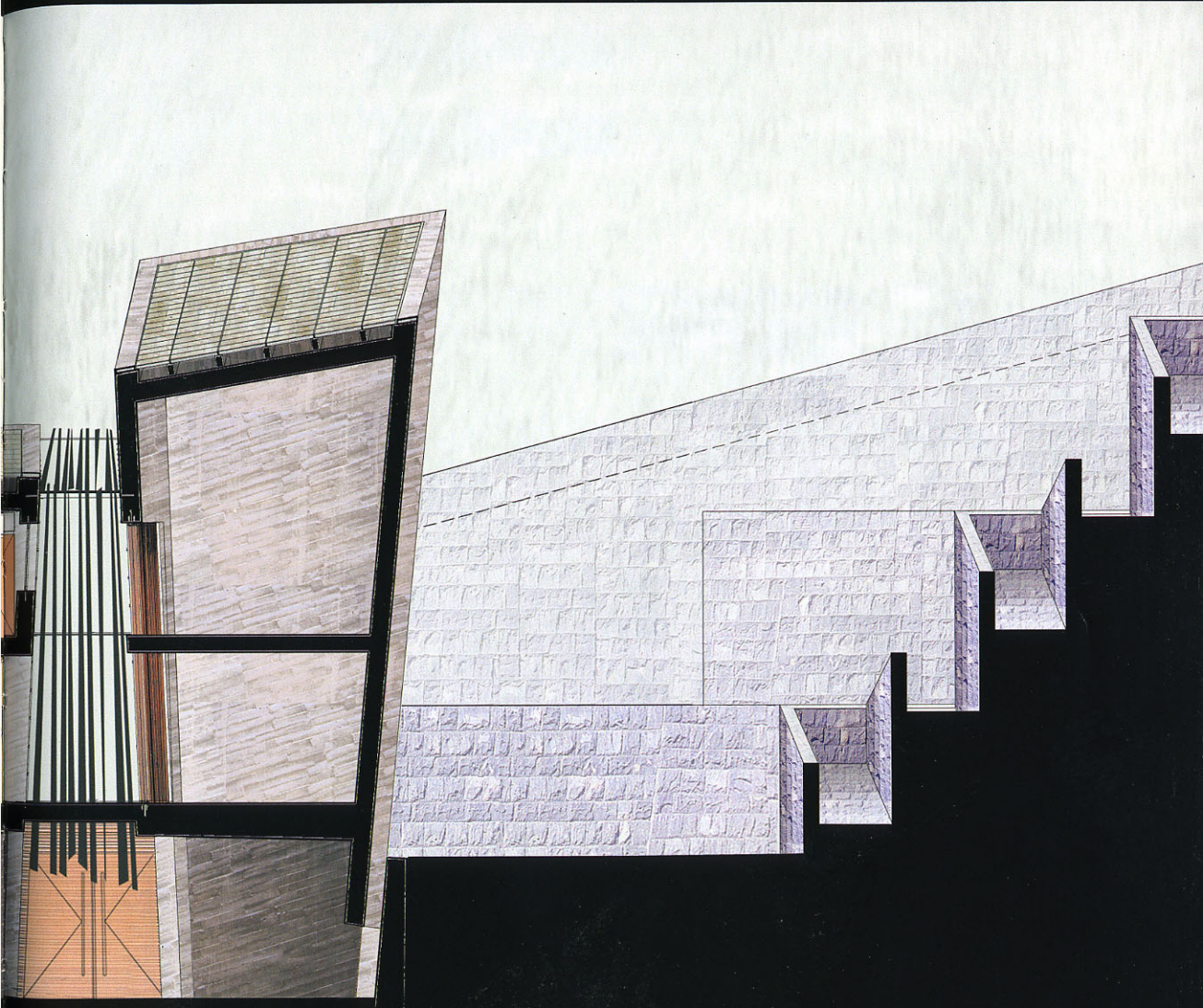
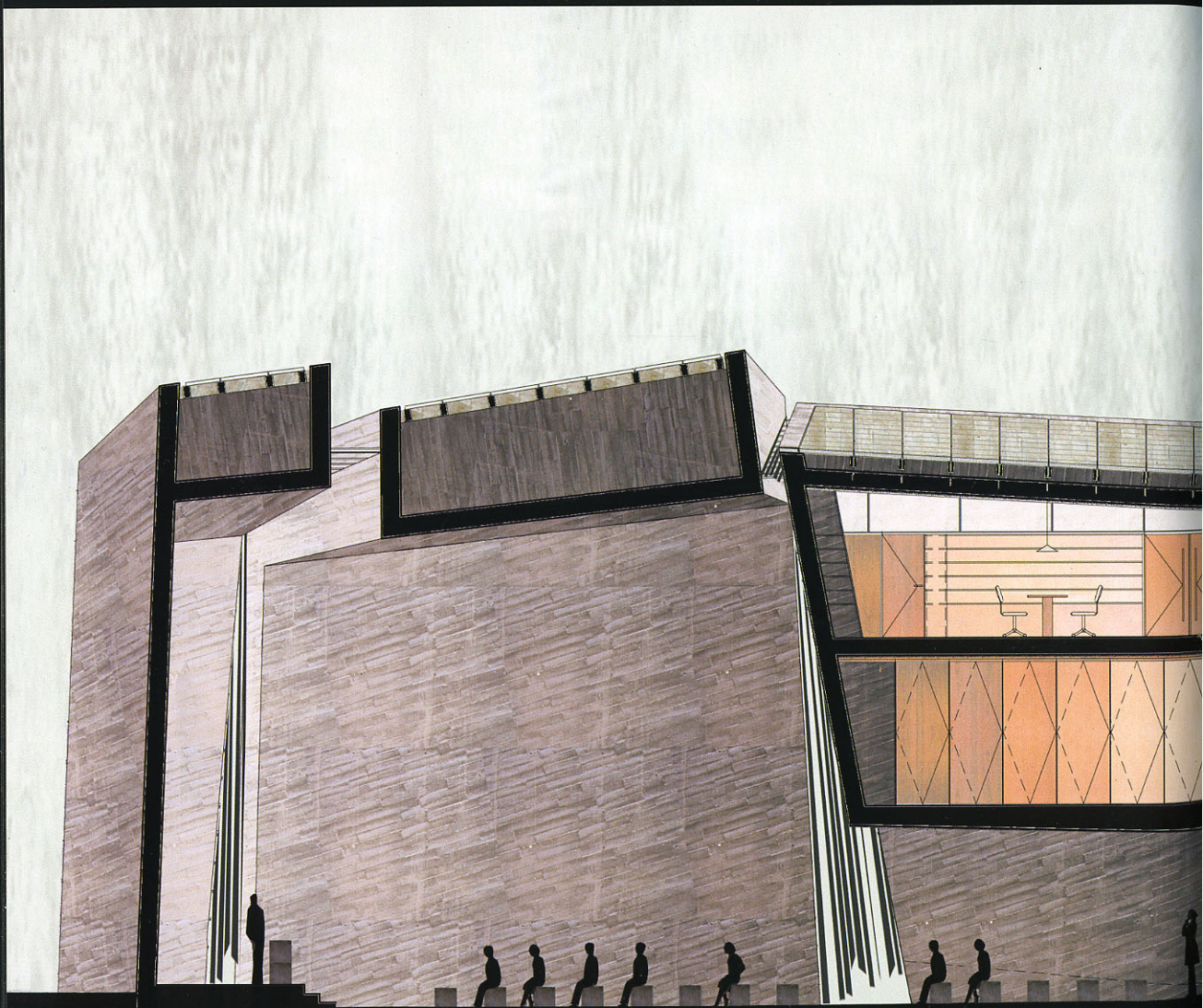
Since light is one of the most important elements for any religious complex, the project is conceived so that the zenithal light endows each room with mystical dimension.

Topographical variations (4.2 m) between Los Majuelos Str. and the site make the urban environment rather restrictive. In order to provide access to the square and to the first upper story of the church, a large entrance ramp surrounds and curves around the building. The fundamental idea of the project is to shape a point of visual reference within the urban landscape. This is conceived in terms of massive independent volumes (the large elements of fairfaced concrete) which characterize the project as a whole. Between these volumes is a space that is transformed into a courtyard with natural light and ventilation. All spaces are oriented towards this illuminated courtyard, making it an ideal space for exhibitions and for communication between users and visitors.

Client: Pd SR

Contractor: Construcciones Carolina





This project was a finalist at the VIII Bienal de Arquitectura Española on July 22, 2005.

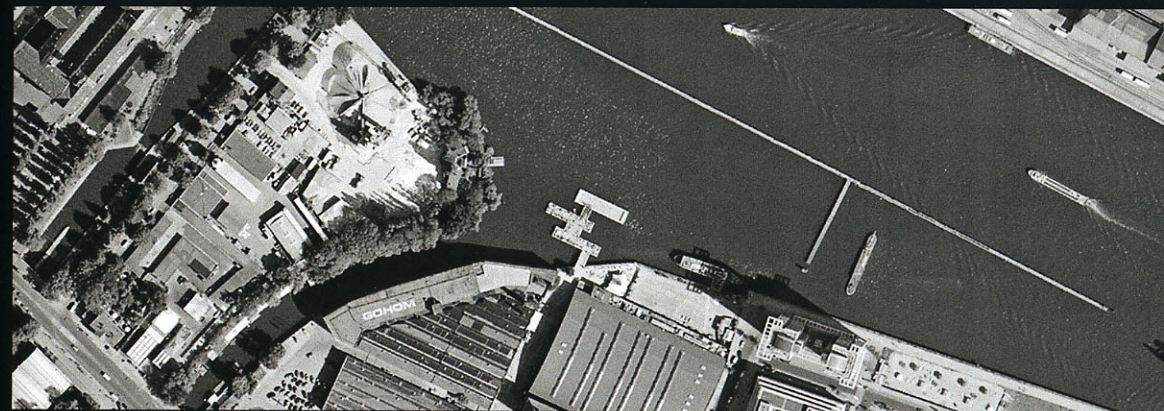
The Spree bathing ship is a living bridge to life along the Spree River. Consisting of a floating box, beach, container, and wood platforms connecting the various elements, the ensemble transforms the Spree into a public meeting point, a place of communication. All of the various elements can be placed within the floating basin and transported along the river, creating a mobile bath. The bridge connecting the beach and pool consists of a simple wood construction. This flexible structure allows for the rapid dismantling and mobility of the piece, and its subsequent adaptation to new locations along the rivers edge. Set at eye level to the Spree, the pool creates the effect of swimming in the river itself.

The project brings bathing back to the Spree, and thus revisits an old Berlin tradition: Until the end of the 19th century, 15 private bathing pavilions, or »Badeschiffe«, existed along the river. Because of the progressive contamination of the Spree's waters, these baths were closed before the 1st World War. With the construction of the pool, clear water returns to river and city, bringing new vitality to the river.

Architects: Artengo Menis Pastrana -AMP- with Susanne Lorenz and Gil Wilk

Promotor: Heike Catherina Müller

Construction company: MBS-Märkische Bunker und Service GMBH & Co KG, Berlin



Conventions Center. Playa de las Américas,
1996 - 2005

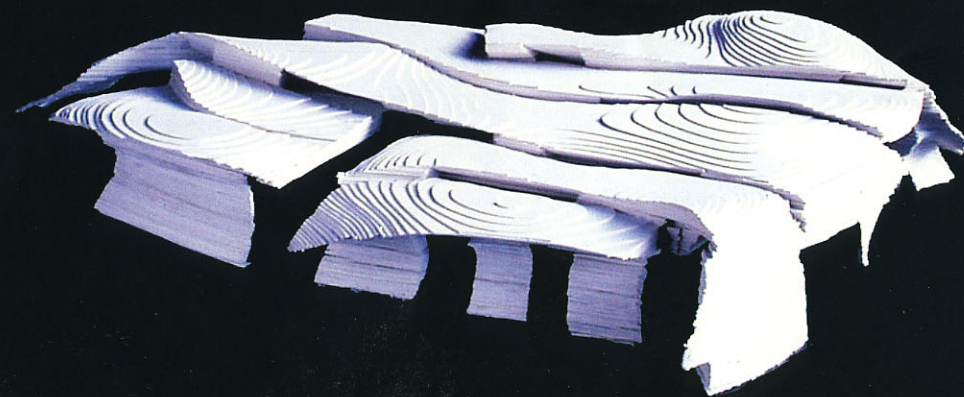
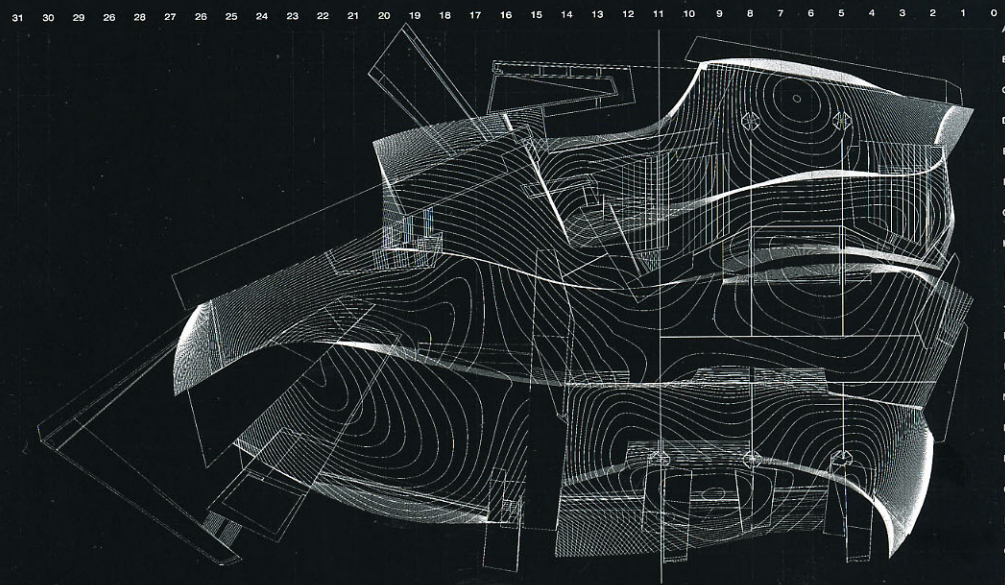
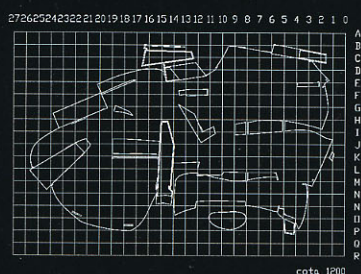
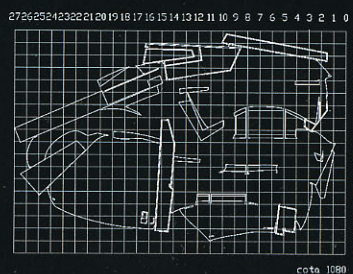
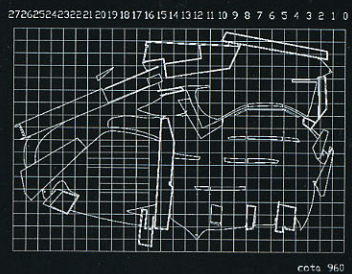
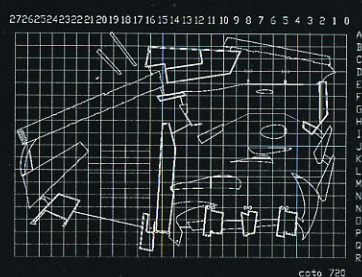
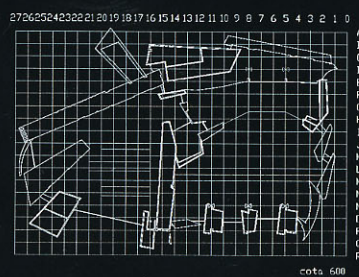
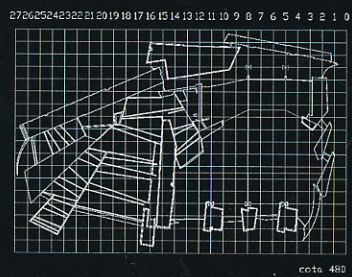
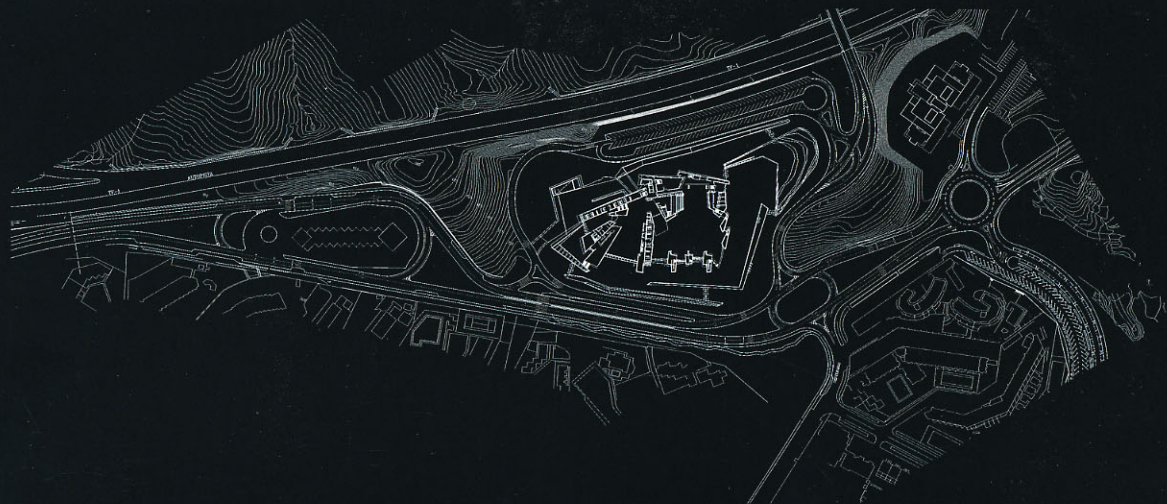
Set in an exceptional location close to the airport and highway, and placed in the biggest tourist spot in the island, surrounded by numerous hotel complexes, the MAGMA Arte&Congresos, the Convention Centre in Tenerife, appears as a reference point. The semi-desert landscape around it and the presence of the sea are the starting points of the concept of the building. Though it is not situated directly on the water, it does have a strong relation with the ocean, an imposing presence that frames the building with a constant view of La Gomera Island. The building takes advantage of this relationship, being set on the hill at the perfect height to show off its profile against the sea. From the distance, the building asserts itself arrogantly through its constructive forms, expressiveness, and strength, while close up it dissolves into its surroundings, blending with the environment.

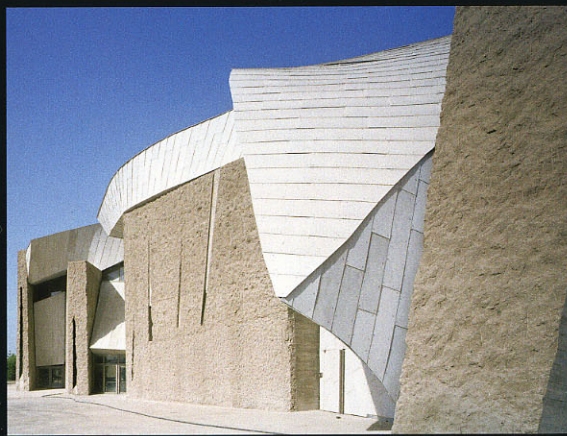
Thirteen geometrically shaped blocks emerge from the base; these house all programmatic functions: offices, restrooms, cafeteria... These pieces arise, creating a fault line that produces the flow of the roof, imagined as a liquid in motion, outlining the space in every direction. The undulating surface becomes fractured, creating cracks of light and ventilation, splitting and multiplying everywhere with a sensation of lightness.

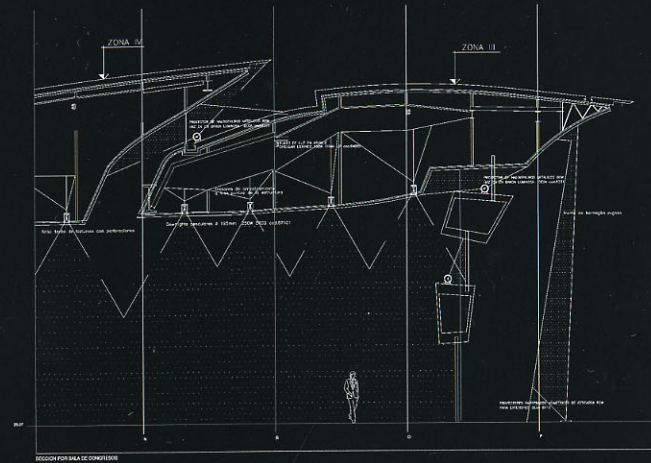
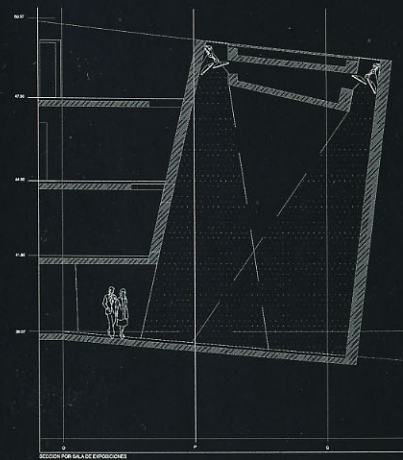
The in-between spaces are the conference halls, which can be used for different activities with varying degrees of compartmentalization. The main conference hall, placed in the ground floor, has 2354 m² surface plus a stage measuring 300 m² that can hold around 2500 people. It can be divided in up into nine small conference rooms that can seat 300 people each. The first floor hall has 1865 m² of surface and can be also divided into smaller rooms that accommodate between 20 and 200 people. This transformation is achieved by soundproofed panels set in wardrobe - rocks.

Technical requirements have determined, which strives for certain acoustic results. The flowing and undulating role of the roof inside responds to technical necessities which were determined during the construction process, with the help of collaborators, among them the director of the Symphonic Orchestra of Tenerife.

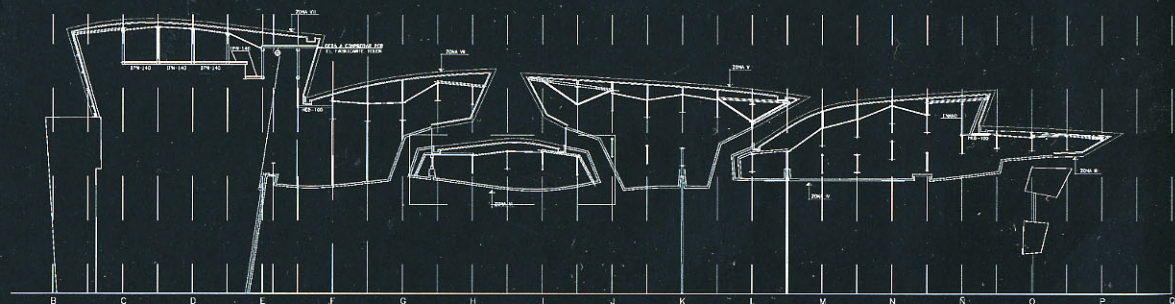












PROJECT: MAGMA Arte&Congresos

ADDRESS: Costa Adeje, Tenerife, Spain

CLIENT: Canarias Congress Bureau Tenerife Sur S.A.

ARCHITECTS: Artengo Menis Pastrana, AMP

Andreas Weihnacht (project architect, 1997-2000),

Esther Ceballos (project architect, since 2000)

Ana Salinas (project architect)

TECHNICAL: Rafael Hernández Hernández, Andrés Pedreño Vega

STRUCTURE: Víctor Martínez Segovia (building),

Juan José Gallardo

HEATING, VENTILATION, A/C: Milián Asociados

ACOUSTICAL ENGINEERING: Pedro Cerdá,

Antonio Carrión (audioscan)

LIGHTNING DESIGN: Carlos Belda

LIGHT SCULPTURE: Juan Gopar

SIGNAGE: Miriam Durango

CONSTRUCTION COMPANY: Congress UTE - Acciona Infraestructuras, PPL -, Fernando Merino (project manager)

PHOTOS: Jordi Bernadó, Hisao Suzuki, Carlos Lapresta

CHAISE-LONG INSTALLATION: Karim Rashid

SITE AREA: 27.784,47 m²

FLOOR AREA: 14.141,43 m²

BUILT AREA: 20.434,44 m²

START OF PLANNING: April 1997

START OF CONSTRUCTION: December 1998

COMPLETION: November 2005

BUILDING COSTS: 28.962.181 EUR

COST PER m²: 1.417,32 EUR/m²

Fernando Menis

Fernando Menis was born in 1951 in Santa Cruz de Tenerife. He studied architecture in Barcelona before moving to France where he worked for two years. Back in Tenerife he grounded Artengo Menis Pastrana -AMP- together with his colleagues. In 2004 he opened his own office, Menis Arquitectos. PRIZES

1st. International Competition for Industrial Design:

Un objeto para b.d., with arq. Inés Rodríguez Mansilla.

Chaise Longue YUH (1989);

1st. Prize Manuel de Oráa. MM House (1989);

finalist FAD MM House (1999);

1st. Puerto de la Cruz Seafront (2004);

1st. Agulo and Vallehermoso Historical Center Rehabilitation. La Gomera (2005);

1st. Muvisa Social Apartments (2005).

LECTURES

Menis is a visiting professor, leads workshops and gives lectures in Havana, Berlin, Paris, Barcelona, Valencia, León, Castellón, Santiago de Compostela, Benicassim, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Adeje (Tenerife)

PUBLICATION

Reviews and Magazines: Quaderns, COAM, On, Wallpaper.

Fernando Menis

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38003 Santa Cruz de Tenerife

martinmenisarq@telefonica.net

Menis Arquitectos

MENIS ARQUITECTOS consists of:

Fernando Menis (architect), Simona Rota (administration), Taymoore Balbaa (architect), María Berga (architect) Carlos Lapresta (architect), Bruno Rodríguez (architect)

Other collaborators:

Juan José Gallardo (structure), Segovia&Pallas (structure), Milián Asociados (A/C, heating), Audioscan (acoustical engineering)

PUERTO DE LA CRUZ: CCRS arquitectos; Attenya Campos, Amado Martín; Amigó & Olcina ingenieros; Ricardo Haroun Agulo&Vallehermoso: Burkhard Koehler, Martin Murrenhof, Jan Schreiber

CUCHILLITOS PARK: Attenya Campos, Daniel Lorenzo, Albert Marín, Amado Martín

INDUSTRIAL WAREHOUSE: David Arias

MUVISA: Roberto Delgado

LA PALMERA HOUSE: David Arias

CHURCH IN LA LAGUNA: Niels Heinrich, Andreas Weihnacht,

Alice Berthelon, Sabine Megow

Exhibition

February 2 - March 19, 2006

Aedes East

Rosenthaler Str. 40-41

Hackesche Höfe, Hof II

10178 Berlin

Aedes Berlin

www.aedes-arc.de

Impressum

PUBLISHER

Kristin Feireiss,

Hans-Jürgen Commerell

TEXT »Tektonische Verwerfungen«

Roman Hollenstein

ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

Jan Pepper

PHOTOS

Jordi Bernadó, Hisao Suzuki, Carlos Lapresta,

Uwe Walter

DESIGN

Gudrun Olthoff

PRODUCTION

HillerMedien, Berlin

PRINTING

Medialis, Berlin

© 2006 Aedes and the authors

ISBN 3-937093-59-1

Für die freundliche Unterstützung der Ausstellung und des Katalogs danken wir:

The exhibition and the catalogue were very kindly supported by:



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AYUNTAMIENTO DE ADEJE

MENIS ARQUITECTOS